

§219.3

36 CFR Ch. II (7–1–08 Edition)

§219.3 Nature of land management planning.

(a) *Principles of land management planning.* Land management planning is an adaptive management process that includes social, economic, and ecological evaluation; plan development, plan amendment, and plan revision; and monitoring. The aim of planning is to produce responsible land management for the NFS based on useful and current information and guidance. Land management planning guides the Forest Service in fulfilling its responsibilities for stewardship of the NFS to best meet the needs of the American people.

(b) *Force and effect of plans.* Plans developed in accord with this subpart generally contain desired conditions, objectives, and guidance for project and activity decisionmaking in the plan area. Plans do not grant, withhold, or modify any contract, permit, or other legal instrument; subject anyone to civil or criminal liability; or create any legal rights. Plans typically do not approve or execute projects and activities. Decisions with effects that can be meaningfully evaluated (40 CFR 1508.23) typically are made when projects and activities are approved.

§219.4 National Environmental Policy Act compliance.

(a) In accord with 16 U.S.C. 1604(g)(1) this subpart clarifies how the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321–4346) (hereinafter referred to as NEPA) applies to NFS land management planning.

(b) Approval of a plan, plan amendment, or plan revision, under the authority of this subpart, will be done in accord with the Forest Service NEPA procedures.

(c) Nothing in this subpart alters the application of NEPA to proposed projects and activities.

(d) Monitoring and evaluations, including those required by §219.6, may be used or incorporated by reference, as appropriate, in applicable NEPA documents.

§219.5 Environmental management systems.

The responsible official will establish an environmental management system (EMS) or conform to a multi-unit, re-

gional, or national level EMS. The scope of an EMS will include, at the minimum, land management environmental aspects as determined by the responsible official or established in a multi-unit, regional, or national level EMS. An EMS may also include environmental aspects unrelated to land management if deemed appropriate.

(a) An EMS may be established independently of the planning process.

(b) The Chief of the Forest Service shall establish procedures in the Forest Service Directive System to ensure that an appropriate EMS(s) is in place. The responsible official may determine whether and how to change and improve an EMS, consistent with those procedures.

(c) The EMS must conform to the consensus standard developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and adopted by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) as “ISO 14001: Environmental Management Systems—Specification With Guidance For Use” (ISO 14001). The ISO 14001 describes EMSs and outlines the elements of an EMS.

(d) No project or activity approved under a plan developed, amended, or revised under the requirements of this subpart may be implemented until the responsible official establishes an EMS or the responsible official conforms to a multi-unit, regional, or national level EMS as required by this section.

§219.6 Evaluations and monitoring.

(a) *Evaluations.* The responsible official shall keep the plan set of documents up to date with evaluation reports, which will reflect changing conditions, science, and other relevant information. The following three types of evaluations are required for land management planning: Comprehensive evaluations for plan development and revision, evaluations for plan amendment, and annual evaluations of monitoring information. The responsible official shall document evaluations in evaluation reports, make these reports available to the public as required in §219.9, and include these reports in the plan set of documents (§219.7(a)(1)). Evaluations under this section should be commensurate to the level of risk or benefit associated with the nature and